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ABSTRACT

As part of a review of its Small Business Management courses and seminars, William Rainey Harper College in Illinois conducted a study of students currently enrolled in spring 1995 and students who had enrolled from fall 1993 to fall 1994 to determine the students' characteristics, the effectiveness of marketing efforts, and students' perceptions of program effectiveness. Completed questionnaires were received from a total of 122 students, including 49 current students and 73 from a sample of 200 former students. Study findings included the following: (1) 63% of the small business enrollees were female, the average age was 41, and the mean family income of the students was $60,000; (2) in terms of student goals, 31% were trying to decide whether or not to own their own business, 27% were gathering information on how to start a business, 23% were seeking help to better manage their current business, and 20% were interested in expanding their current business; (3) 73.5% rated the courses as beneficial or very beneficial and 81% would recommend the classes to others; (4) the most common marketing method that prompted students to enroll was the college's class schedule mailed to their home, cited by 67.5%; and (5) 40% registered for their class via touchtone machine interaction and 60% via telephone interaction with a college employee. The survey instrument is appended. (BCY)

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William Rainey Harper College

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

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## FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF STUDENTS WHO ENROLLED IN SMALL BUSINESS NON-CREDIT COURSES AT HARPER COLLEGE

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JC 960 511



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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to follow-up students who have previously or are currently enrolled in a Small Business Management non-credit course or seminar. The study examined the profile of the enrollees, marketing and evaluation data. A survey instrument was distributed to those enrolled in spring 1995 classes and was mailed to those who had previously enrolled in the past year and a half.

After two mailings and a telephone prompting, a 36.5 percent response rate was obtained. Both means produced a total of 122 completed surveys for analysis.

Results of the study showed that those enrolled in Small Business Management have a higher income and education level than other non-credit students. The majority of students enrolled are not self-employed but are either trying to decide whether or not to own their own business or are seeking help on how to start up the business about which they have been thinking. The large minority who are self-employed are either seeking help to better manage their current business or are looking for aids to expand their business. Unlike other non-credit programs, the semester schedule mailed directly to their homes seems to be the effective means for attracting small business non-credit students.

The vast majority of enrollees are either first time students or those in the middle of their educational development so there is lots of future enrollment potential among current students.

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## Purpose

The purpose of this study was to follow-up students who have previously or are currently enrolled in a Small Business Management non-credit course or seminar. The study examined the profile of the enrollees, marketing and evaluation data. The study was one component in the program review for Professional and Business Development and was requested by the coordinator of that department.

## Methodology and Population Surveyed

The survey instrument shown in the appendix was developed jointly by the Office of Planning and Research and the Coordinator of Professional and Business Development. It was administered in Spring 1995 to small business non-credit classes. Completed surveys were obtained from 49 students in this manner. In addition, 367 students were identified who had enrolled in Small Business Management courses and seminars from the fall of 1993 through the fall of 1994. A random sample of 200 was drawn from this population. After two mailings of the survey instrument and prompting telephone calls to this sample, 73 completed surveys were returned for a response rate of 36.5 percent. Thus, with the mail response and the surveys collected in the spring 1995 classes, 122 completed surveys were available for analysis.

## Major Conclusions

Those enrolled in Small Business Management have a higher income and education level than other non-credit students. The majority of students enrolled are not self-employed but are either trying to decide whether or not to own their own business or are seeking help on how to start up the business about which they have been thinking.

The large minority who are self-employed are either seeking help to better manage their current business or are looking for aids to expand their business. Unlike other non-credit programs, the semester schedule mailed directly to their homes seems to be the effective means for attracting small business non-credit students. The vast majority of enrollees are either first time students or those in the middle of their educational development so there is lots of future enrollment potential among current students.

## Discussion of Results

Profile of the small business enrollees indicate 63 percent are female, the average age is 41 and 75 percent live in the Harper College District, all of which matches the profile of other non-credit students. However, the mean income of small business students is $60,000 and 47 percent have a bachelors degree. The income and education level of these students is higher than typical non-credit students.

Their employment profile shows half are employed now by someone else and 44 percent are self-employed. In terms of their goals in the courses they are enrolled in, 31 percent are trying to decide whether or not to own their own business while 27 percent are gathering "how to" information on starting a new business. Another 23 percent are seeking help to better manage their current business while 20 percent are seeking help in expanding their current business. In assessing where they are in their educational goals, 44 percent are taking their first course in Small Business Management at Harper College and are planning to take more. Moreover, 45 percent are in the middle of their educational development at Harper while only 12 percent are finishing their educational development at Harper in Small Business Management.

In examining those presently owning their own business, they are fairly evenly divided between retail, marketing, services and construction. A fair number are also in design, business, profession, and trades. They have been in their own business for an average of 4.5 years.

Three-fourths of the students rated the offerings beneficial and the instruction at least very good. Some 81 percent would recommend the classes to others. Some specific areas for improvement were listed. In addition, two thirds of the students judged that the offerings ran about the right length of time and were offered at very convenient times.

**Discussion of Results (cont'd)**

The primary means that prompted students to enroll in small business classes was the semester schedule (67.5%) mailed to their home. Only 25.9 percent were influenced by brochures mailed to their home or business. This is quite different than the marketing mix that works best for the Institute of Management Development. The reason for this difference is that in Small Business Management most students are not yet in the business of their choice but are either deciding whether or not to go into the business or are gathering information on how to get started.

Students register for the classes in two ways - touchtone interaction with a machine (40%) and telephone interaction with a person (60%). Registration is generally rated as easy and pleasant. Only 28 percent of the students desire more than one class and 80 percent of these students are able to do so. Moreover, 90 percent of the students are able to register for all the courses desired with only 6 percent finding other desired classes filled. About a third of those registering ask for additional information at the same time and almost all are able to get the information in a satisfactory manner.

**Survey of Students in Small Business Management**

| Gender | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| Male | 44 | 37.0 |
| Female | 75 | 63.0 |
| Total | 119 | 100.0 |

| Employment Status | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| Employed by someone else | 62 | 49.6 |
| Unemployed | 8 | 6.4 |
| Self-employed | 55 | 44.0 |
| Total | 125 | 100.0 |

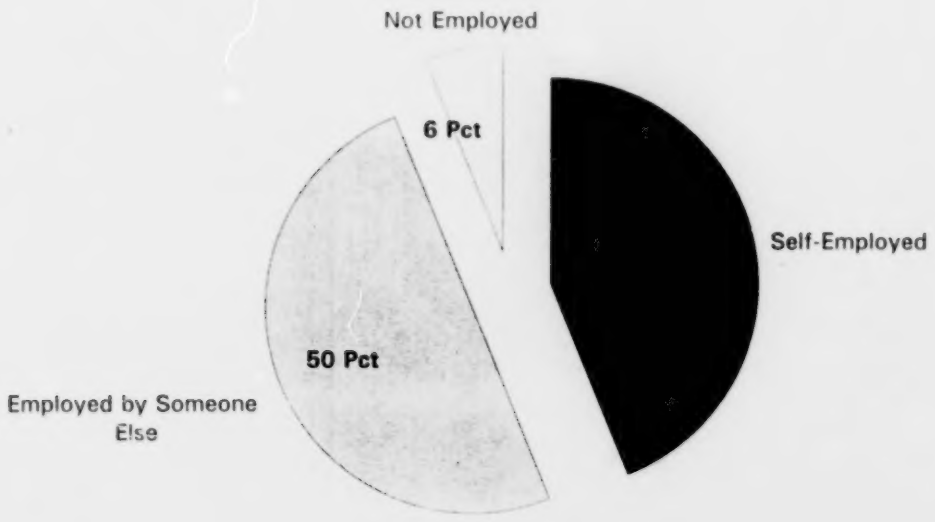
| Age | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| Under 21 | 0 | 0 |
| 21 - 25 | 4 | 3.4 |
| 26 - 35 | 43 | 36.5 |
| 36 - 45 | 32 | 27.1 |
| 46 - 61 | 34 | 28.8 |
| 62 and Older | 5 | 4.2 |
| Total | 118 | 100.0 |
| Average Age | 41.1 | |

| Education Level | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| Less than High School | 0 | 0 |
| High School | 10 | 8.3 |
| Some College | 54 | 45.0 |
| Bachelor Degree | 41 | 34.2 |
| Advanced Degree | 15 | 12.5 |
| Total | 120 | 100.0 |

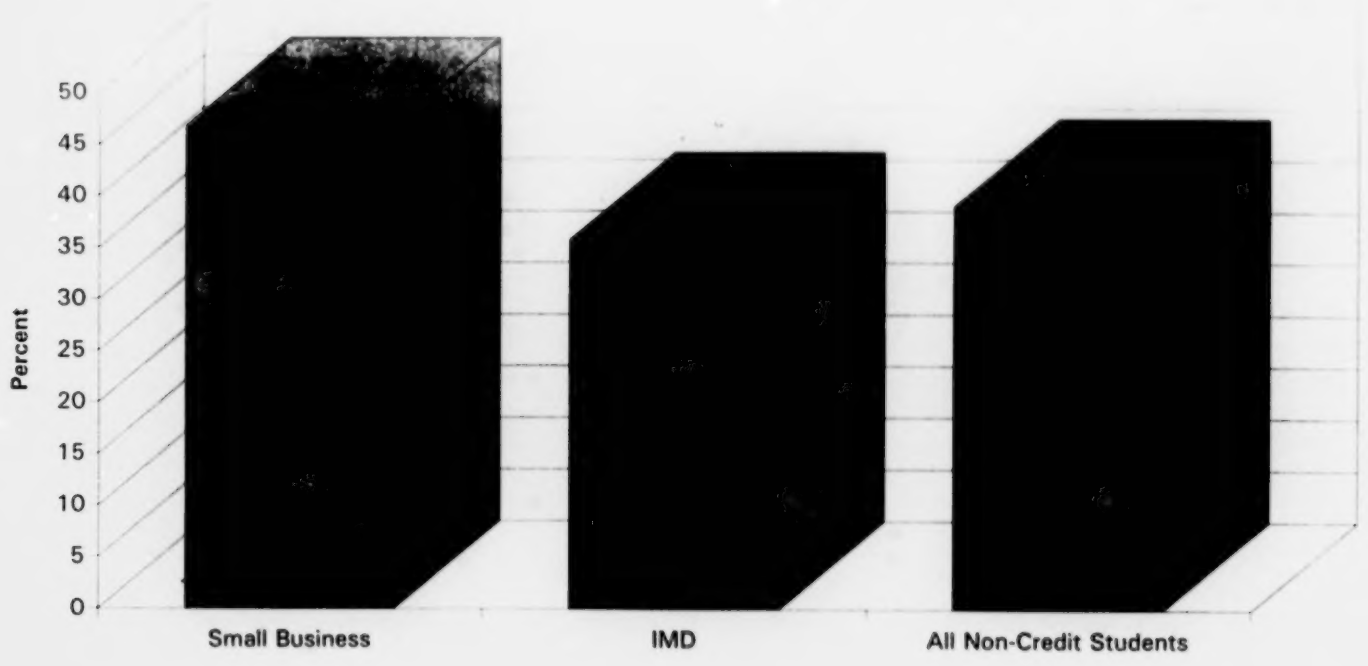
| Family Income | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| - Under $20,000 | 4 | 3.8 |
| - $20,000 - $30,000 | 9 | 8.7 |
| - $39,000 - $40,000 | 15 | 14.4 |
| - $40,000 - $50,000 | 9 | 8.7 |
| - $50,000 - $75,000 | 36 | 34.6 |
| - Over $75,000 | 31 | 29.8 |
| Total | 104 | 100.0 |
| Median Income | $60,400 | |
| Mean Income | $59,400 | |

| Reasons for Starting Their Own Business | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| - Wanted to work for themselves | 41 | 59.4 |
| - Encouraged by friends, family, co-workers | 9 | 13.0 |
| - Was unemployed -- needed a job | 7 | 10.1 |
| - Family business passed down from relatives | 5 | 7.2 |
| - Found niche or opportunity and responded | 2 | 2.9 |
| - Had children at home - started home based business | 1 | 1.5 |
| - No longer liked current job | 1 | 1.5 |
| - Wanted to join spouse in business | 1 | 1.5 |
| - Injured on regular job | 1 | 1.5 |
| - Wanted to get ahead | 1 | 1.4 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 |

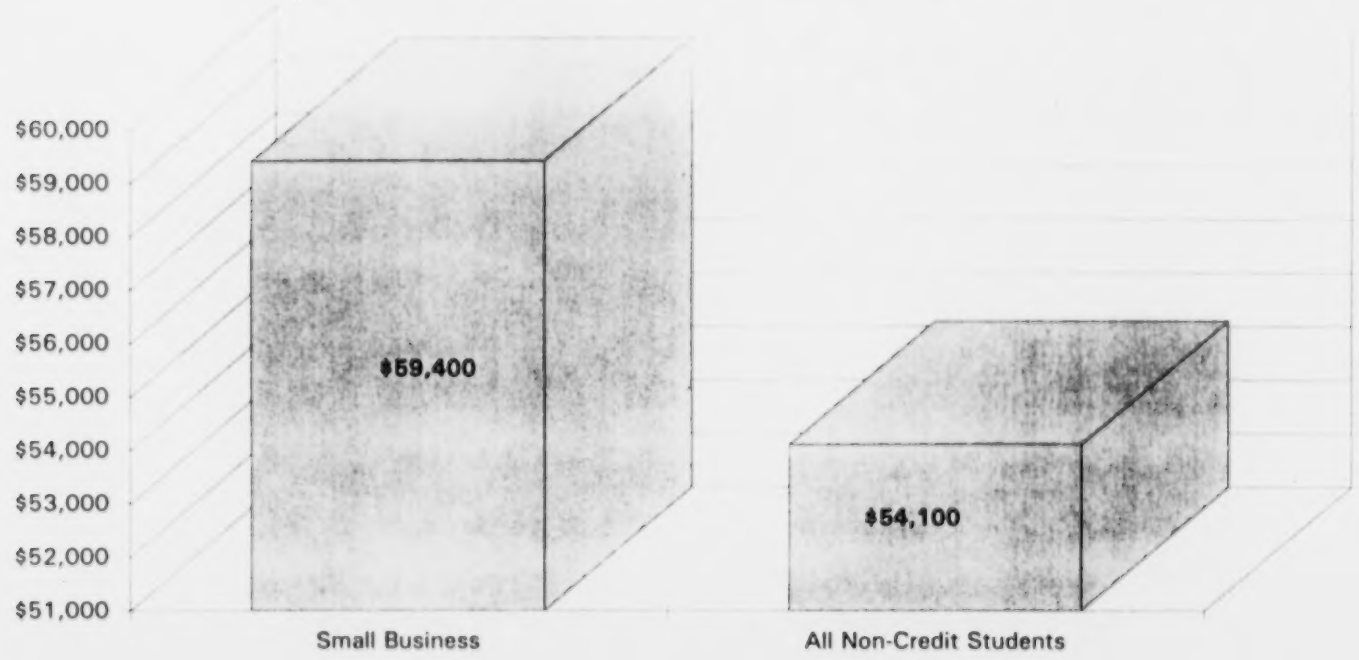
## Employment Status of Small Business Students



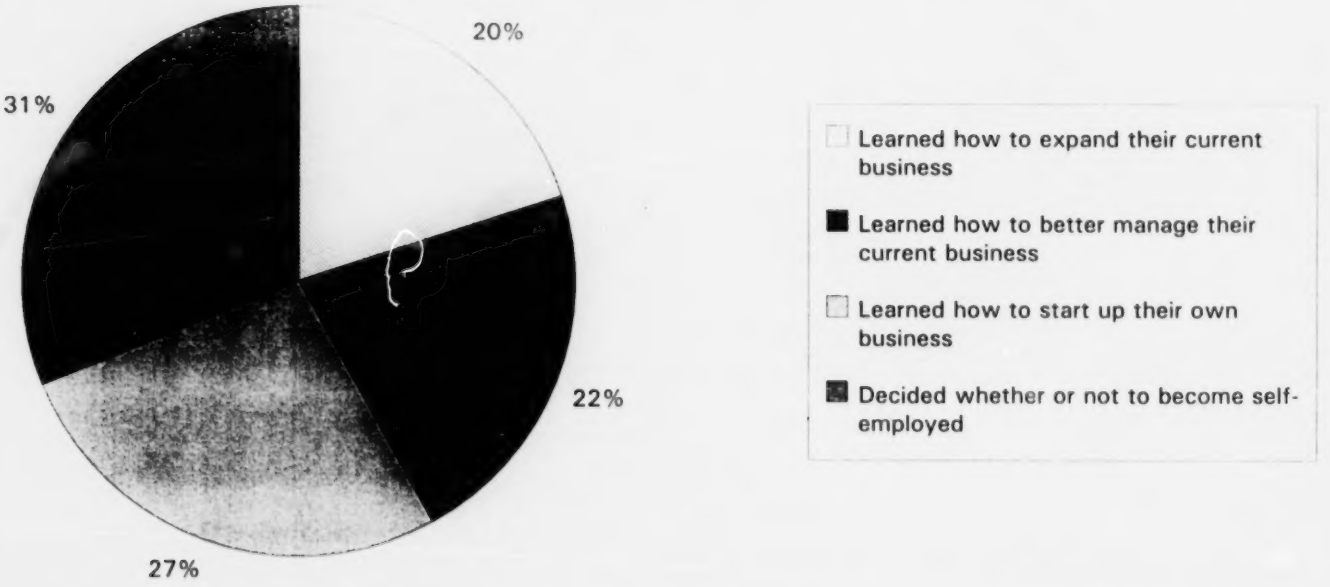
**Profile of Non-Credit Enrollment---Education Level Achieved a Bachelor Degree or Higher**



Profile of Non-Credit Enrollment---Income Level (Mean Family Income)



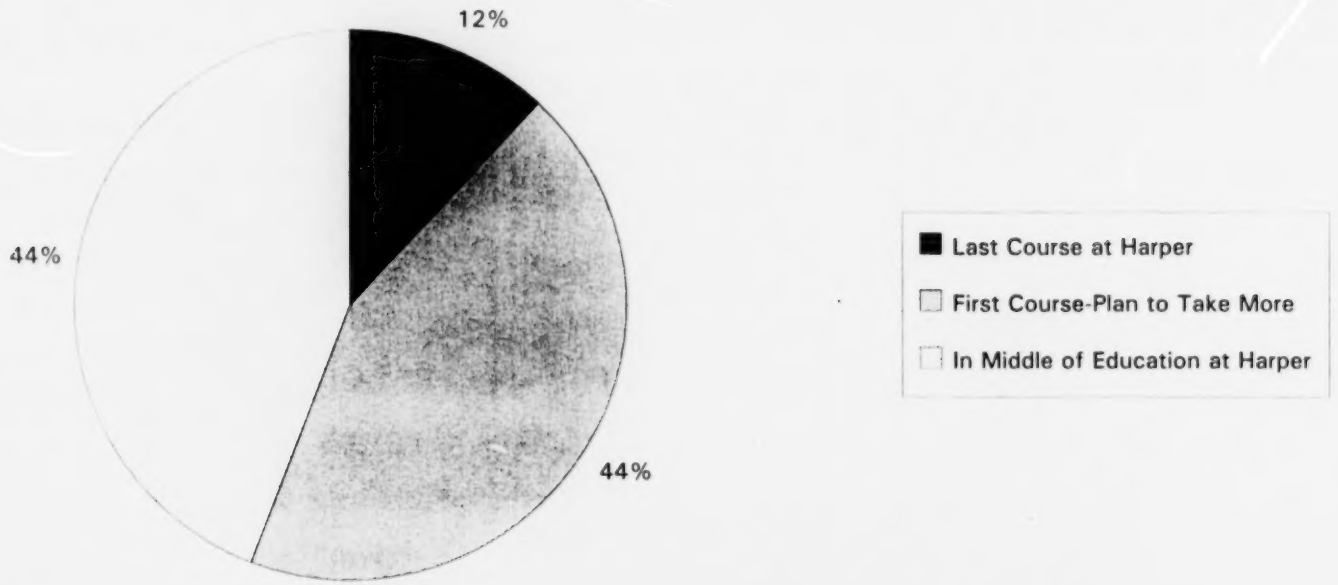
**Educational Goals of Small Business Students**


20%
31%
22%
27%
Learned how to expand their current business
Learned how to better manage their current business
Learned how to start up their own business
Decided whether or not to become self-employed

13

14

## Educational Development Status of Small Business Students



| Business/Career Goal | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| - Start a business | 50 | 46.7 |
| - Expand an existing business | 48 | 44.9 |
| - Contribute more to current/future employers business | 9 | 8.4 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 |

| Where they are in their training schedule to accomplish goals | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| - This is first course/plan to take more | 49 | 43.8 |
| - Have taken courses in past/plan to take more | 50 | 44.6 |
| - This is last course to be taken at Harper College | 13 | 11.6 |
| Total | 112 | 100.0 |

| Why Students Enrolled in the Small Business Management Courses at Harper | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| - To help student decide whether he/she wanted to own own business | 37 | 30.8 |
| - To help student know how to open the business he/she has been thinking about | 32 | 26.7 |
| - To help student better manage his/her current business | 27 | 22.5 |
| - To help student expand his/her own current business | 24 | 20.0 |
| Total | 120 | 100.0 |

## Residence

| In - District Village | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| - Schaumburg | 24 | 20.3 |
| - Hoffman Estates | 16 | 13.6 |
| - Arlington Heights | 10 | 8.5 |
| - Palatine | 10 | 8.5 |
| - Elk Grove | 6 | 5.1 |
| - Mt. Prospect | 4 | 3.4 |
| - Barrington | 3 | 2.5 |
| - Buffalo Grove | 3 | 2.5 |
| - Rolling Meadows | 2 | 1.7 |
| - Wheeling | 2 | 1.7 |
| - Inverness | 2 | 1.7 |
| - Barrington Hills | 2 | 1.7 |
| - Lake Barrington Shores | 1 | .9 |
| - Roselle | 1 | .9 |
| - Hanover Park | 1 | .8 |
| - South Barrington | 1 | .8 |
| Total In-District | 88 | 74.6 |

| Out-of-District College District Area | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| - Elgin Community College | 8 | 6.8 |
| - College of Lake County | 6 | 5.1 |
| - College of DuPage | 5 | 4.2 |
| - McHenry Community College | 3 | 2.6 |
| - Oakton Community College | 3 | 2.5 |
| - Out-of-State | 2 | 1.7 |
| - Waubonsee Community College | 1 | .9 |
| - Chicago Community College | 1 | .8 |
| - Rock Valley Community College | 1 | .8 |
| Total Out-of-District | 30 | 25.4 |
| Grand Total | 118 | 100.0 |

## Type of Business Clients Own

| | | Sub-Total N | Sub-Total PCT |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Retail** | | 8 | 13.1 |
| - General | 2 | | |
| - Used Printing Equip. Sales | 1 | | |
| - Gift Shop | 1 | | |
| - Gift Mail Order | 1 | | |
| - Wedding Consultant | 1 | | |
| - Hardware | 1 | | |
| - Children's Boutique | 1 | | |
| **Marketing** | | 8 | 13.1 |
| - Specialty Advertising | 3 | | |
| - Manufacturer's Rep | 2 | | |
| - Direct Sales | 1 | | |
| - International | 1 | | |
| - Wholesaler | 1 | | |

| | | Sub-Total N | Sub-Total PCT |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Trades** | | 5 | 8.2 |
| - Auto Repair | 1 | | |
| - Telephone Repair Service | 1 | | |
| - Handyman Service | 1 | | |
| - Heating & Air Conditioning | 1 | | |
| - Electrical Contractor | 1 | | |
| **Business Services/Technical** | | 4 | 6.6 |
| - Office Support Services | 2 | | |
| - Business Services | 1 | | |
| - Desktop Publishing | 1 | | |
| **Telecommunications** | | 3 | 4.9 |
| - Corporate Communications Product Services | 2 | | |
| - Telecommunications | 1 | | |

## Type of Business Clients Own

| | | Sub-Total N | Sub-Total PCT |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Services** | | 8 | 13.1 |
| - Catering | 2 | | |
| - Consulting | 1 | | |
| - Health & Medical Information and Education | 1 | | |
| - Non-Profit Organization | 1 | | |
| - Service | 1 | | |
| - Cleaning Service | 1 | | |
| - Entertainment Service | 1 | | |
| **Construction** | | 7 | 11.5 |
| - Home Building | 2.5 | | |
| - Construction Consulting | 2 | | |
| - Remodeling | 1.5 | | |
| **Design** | | 6 | 9.9 |
| - Graphic Arts & Design | 3 | | |
| - Floral Design | 1 | | |
| - Fashion Design | 1 | | |
| - Interior Design | 1 | | |
| **Business Professions** | | 5 | 8.2 |
| - Real Estate | 2 | | |
| - Insurance | 1 | | |
| - Accounting | 1 | | |
| - Property Management | 1 | | |

| | | Sub-Total N | Sub-Total PCT |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Computer** | | 3 | 4.9 |
| - Computer Training | 2 | | |
| - Computer Consultant | 1 | | |
| **Business Services/Professional** | | 3 | 4.9 |
| - Administrative Asst. Services | 1 | | |
| - Product Design & Dev. | 1 | | |
| - Quality Engr. Consulting | 1 | | |
| **Manufacturing** | | 1 | 1.6 |
| GRAND TOTAL | | 61 | 100.0 |

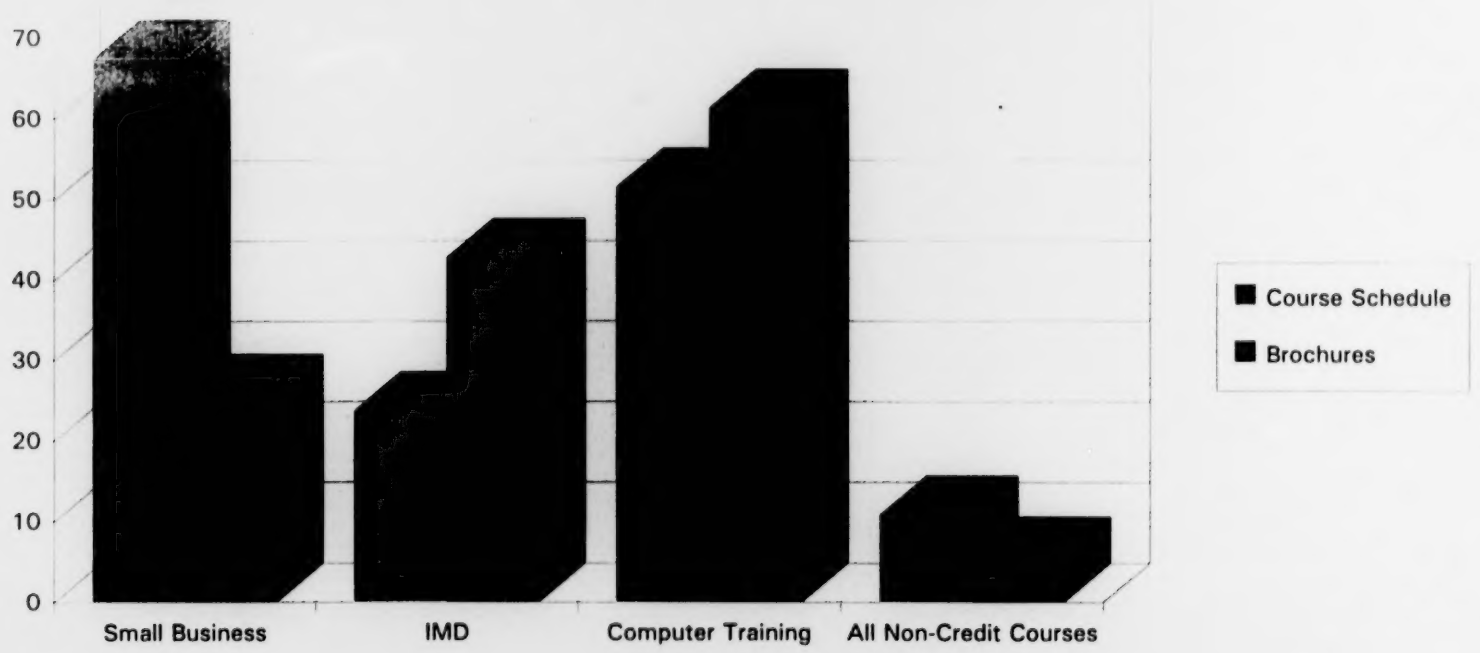
## Length of Time in Their Business

| Time | N | PCT | Time | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Less than one year | 14 | 23.3 | Ten years | 2 | 3.3 |
| One year | 10 | 16.7 | Twelve years | 2 | 3.3 |
| Two years | 8 | 13.3 | Thirteen years | 1 | 1.7 |
| Three years | 3 | 5.0 | Fourteen years | 1 | 1.7 |
| Four years | 4 | 6.7 | Fifteen years | 2 | 3.3 |
| Five years | 6 | 10.0 | Eighteen years | 1 | 1.7 |
| Six years | 2 | 3.3 | Twenty-three years | 1 | 1.7 |
| Seven years | 3 | 5.0 | | | |
| | | | Total | 60 | 100.0 |

Median Time ----- Two Years

Mean Time ----- 4.4 Years

**Means That Convince Students to Enroll in Non-Credit Courses**



| Primary Means Which Prompted Student to Enroll in the Small Business Class | N | PCT of 114 |
|---|---|---|
| - Harper College course schedule received at home | 77 | 67.5 |
| - A specific brochure sent to person's home/business | 29 | 25.4 |
| - Referral from friend/relative who had taken Small Business course at Harper | 8 | 7.0 |
| - Advertising in newspapers | 5 | 4.4 |
| - Referral from a small business counselor at a small business development center - (Mershon Shrigley - 2) | 4 | 3.5 |
| - Referral from a service corps or retired executive (SCORE) counselor | 3 | 2.6 |
| - Announcement in small business publication - Daily Herald, Home & Small Business Reporter | 3 | 2.6 |
| - Information given at a seminar | 2 | 1.8 |
| - Close to home | 2 | 1.8 |
| - Positive experiences in past courses at Harper College | 1 | .9 |

| How Beneficial Small Business Class Was | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| - Very beneficial | 37 | 32.8 |
| - Beneficial | 46 | 40.7 |
| - Somewhat beneficial | 26 | 23.0 |
| - Not beneficial | 4 | 3.5 |
| Total | 113 | 100.0 |

| Opinion About Length of Time of Small Business Offering | | |
|---|---|---|
| - Too Long | 15 | 13.4 |
| - Just right | 79 | 70.5 |
| - Too short | 18 | 16.1 |
| Total | 112 | 100.0 |

| Overall Evaluation of Instruction Received | | |
|---|---|---|
| - Excellent | 27 | 24.3 |
| - Very good | 56 | 50.5 |
| - Adequate | 21 | 18.9 |
| - Less than adequate | 4 | 3.6 |
| - Poor | 3 | 2.7 |
| Total | 111 | 100.0 |

| Likelihood Course/Seminar Would Help Person Fulfill Previously Stated Goals | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| - Very likely | 25 | 22.3 |
| - Likely | 52 | 46.4 |
| - Not sure | 20 | 17.9 |
| - Not very likely | 11 | 9.8 |
| - Not likely at all | 4 | 3.6 |
| Total | 112 | 100.0 |

| Convenience of Time of Small Business Offering | | |
|---|---|---|
| - Very convenient | 68 | 61.3 |
| - Somewhat convenient | 38 | 34.2 |
| - Not convenient | 5 | 4.5 |
| Total | 111 | 100.0 |

| Would They Recommend Class to Others | | |
|---|---|---|
| - Yes | 92 | 81.4 |
| - Not sure | 13 | 11.5 |
| - No | 8 | 7.1 |
| Total | 113 | 100.0 |

## Comments on Instruction

| Types of Comments | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| - Positive | 9 | 37.5 |
| - Mixed | 4 | 16.7 |
| - Negative | 11 | 45.8 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

| Overall Evaluation of Environment of Classroom | | |
|---|---|---|
| - Pleasant | 55 | 50.0 |
| - Satisfactory | 53 | 48.2 |
| - Not so pleasant | 1 | .9 |
| - Uncomfortable - cold | 1 | .9 |
| Total | 110 | 100.0 |

| Negative Comments | N |
|---|---|
| - Marketing was weak | 5 |
| - Need more business examples | 3 |
| - Class was too home-base oriented | 2 |
| - Class needs to be more interactive | 2 |

| Positive Comments | |
|---|---|
| - Down to earth and useful | 2 |
| - Provided opportunity to network | 2 |
| - Class was interactive & provided good creative information | 2 |
| - Taught by a variety of specialists | 2 |

## Comments on Registration

| How They Registered for Small Business Classes | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| - FAX | 0 | 0 |
| - Touchtone/Machine Response | 43 | 40.6 |
| - Phone-in/Response to Person | 63 | 59.4 |
| Total | 106 | 100.0 |

| For Those Registering by Touchtone Telephone/Evaluation | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| - Easy | 49 | 92.5 |
| - Difficult | 4 | 7.5 |
| Total | 53 | 100.0 |

| For Those Registering by Telephone Responding to a Person/Evaluation | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| - Helped quickly & pleasantly | 60 | 81.1 |
| - Helped quickly/but not so pleasantly | 2 | 2.7 |
| - Kept waiting/but was helped pleasantly | 8 | 10.8 |
| - Kept waiting/not helped pleasantly | 0 | 0 |
| - Could not get through easily to register | 4 | 5.4 |
| Total | 74 | 100.0 |

| Did They Register for More Than one Course/Seminar at a Time | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| - Yes - was ready to pay total bill | 20 | 18.3 |
| - Yes - willing to make partial payment for first class while waiting to pay for second class | 4 | 3.7 |
| - No - only wanted to register for one class | 79 | 72.5 |
| - No - wanted to register for more than one class but was unable or unwillingly to pay for all up front | 6 | 5.5 |
| Total | 109 | 100.0 |

| Was Person Able to Register for All the Classes They Wished To Take | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| - Yes | 93 | 90.3 |
| - No - The other classes were full | 6 | 5.8 |
| - No - Did not want to pay for all classes up front but registered late as they could | 1 | 1.0 |
| - No - Did not want to pay for all the classes they wanted up front and did not register later | 3 | 2.9 |
| Total | 103 | 100.0 |

| Did Person Ask for Extra Information About the Class When They Registered | N | PCT |
|---|---|---|
| - Yes - Customer assistance was pleasant | 35 | 31.2 |
| - Yes - Customer assistance was not so pleasant (Was referred to another office to have questions answered) | 1 | .9 |
| - No | 76 | 67.9 |
| Total | 112 | 100.0 |

| Person's Experience in the Process of Registering for the Small Business Course/Seminar | N | PCT Of 113 |
|---|---|---|
| - Easy | 66 | 58.4 |
| - Pleasant | 63 | 55.8 |
| - Difficult | 2 | 1.8 |
| - Difficulty in getting through to registration personnel | 2 | 1.8 |
| - Did not remember | 2 | 1.8 |
| - Very helpful | 1 | .9 |
| - Very busy | 1 | .9 |
| - Difficult to pay bill | 1 | .9 |
| - No one available for information | 1 | .9 |

**Additional Comments**

- 32 made comments

| Type of Comments | N |
|---|---|
| - Positive | 6 |
| - Negative | 11 |
| - Were confused - said they took bookkeeping which was Small Business course | 5 |
| - Cannot remember much about taking Small Business class | 2 |
| - No longer interested in owning their own business | 2 |
| - Asked for additional information from the College | 2 |
| - Explained how they answered the survey | 2 |
| - Dropped course | 1 |

**Additional Comments**

- I called some time after the session to try to find out the location of one of the exhibitors as I wanted his service, but had a difficult time. I was switched from one department to another, told someone who could help me would call me back, but they never did.
- Will not take a similar course without talking to a student who has taken the class with the same faculty -- Total waste of money.
- A broader spectrum of business possibilities.
- This survey is skewed to inquire about one course. I have taken three classes in the last six months and while my comments generally apply to all three, I do have specific opinions about each course. In general, Harper provides good resources at a fair price.
- I have learned plenty from all classes I took so far; however, the bookkeeping class was not only informative but also very enjoyable! Also, I never attended Small Business Management. I have taken bookkeeping and computer classes at Harper and I have filled out questionnaire based on those classes.
- Receiving brochures describing courses appropriate for small business owners is very helpful.
- Sorry you had to do a second request. I did not respond because your records are mistaken. I never have been a student at Harper College. I did attend a working from home expo in October 1993, but never have taken any classes. Therefore, I cannot answer most of these questions.
- The class/seminar I attended was several years ago so I don't remember details - Sorry!
- I was not in Small Business Management classes.
- I am not currently in a Small Business course. I took a one-day course over a year ago so I am not sure if my memory is accurate. In general, I can say I feel every course I have taken at Harper has been very worthwhile. Re Question No. 23 -- my telephone stops entering tones after a certain number so I could not complete the registration in this way.
- Did not feel any more informed at the end of class than in the beginning.
- Re Question 10 -- Business/Career Goal - write a novel. Sorry, but most of your questions do not apply today.
- More time was needed for networking.
- Brochure was extremely misleading. Expected more business opportunities than were there.
- The whole experience was pleasant, convenient, and fulfilling. If I could make one minor suggestion, when everyone would come for our class it was at night. We would be coming straight from jobs and on several occasions the Coke machines would either be out of order or not able to make change and therefore unusable.
- I don't know what course you are asking about.
- The courses were informative and interesting. I just got cold feet, afraid I would fair and not enough money to start up. I am now working at McDonald's - definite paycheck every two weeks.
- I had planned to take other related courses after the first one, but was not at all interested after the first course. Instructor appeared to be totally unprepared - was boring - a waste of time and money. No knowledge whatsoever was obtained. Students in the 21-25 age group related same impression was obtained by them. I was greatly disappointed.
- It might be beneficial to split the class into those not in business yet and those already in their business. More time could be spent on pertinent information needed.
- I am not - now or in the past - enrolled in any of your Small Business Management classes. I do not know how I was identified as a student in the program. I am sure it is a great program but I do not have the time right now.

**Additional Comments (continued)**

- Did not attend course signed up for - conflict with business came up - I registered by mail.
- I do not understand why this survey was sent to me now. I took this course a year ago. I don't remember everything with the registration.
- Overall - this course is great and very helpful.
- More ACC for speakers.
-- I believe the marketing information or section was too long and repetitive.
- Very helpful - I would highly recommend it.
- The course I took gave me the motivation I needed to start my own business. I am now starting to realize the goals that I set for myself.
- Starting a business course was too general and covered too much material. Break it up into smaller pieces so people can follow along, i.e., filling out state and federal forms, contacting IRS and other programs. People go to class and then think they will complete the subject or information later. Big mistake -- because when they get around to it they forgot information and/or have questions. This delays and frustrates individuals -- I'll guess 10-15 percent of the people who take the class actually start a business.
- Would like some information on computer courses to help me in my business.
- Re question 10 about business/career goal - wanted more control of my work schedule and the people I work for.
- Please keep me informed on additional classes that might be of a benefit to me.
- My time is very valuable and I did not appreciate the "Let's wait until everyone is here" attitude of the instructors. I decided that I could read the materials on my own and that my time was better spent elsewhere. I was also turned off by the statement that if we did not start our own business within 6 months we would never do it. Why would anyone want to rush into such a difficult change? I am confident that by taking my time and acquiring skills needed to run my own business while someone else is employing me is a much more realistic and healthy approach. Lastly, I successfully ran my own painting service between ages 15-22 to put myself through school and I had zero instruction. I did things wrong but most of it was common sense. I did not need someone to tell me that shaving and bathing regularly would help improve my appearance.
- Re educational level -- AAS, technical school and trade school, 2 years. Re any additional comment -- The course was too fast, need more time and other people -- business owners to share with their input.

# APPENDIX

- Survey Instrument

- Cover Letter

William Rainey Harper College
1200 West Algonquin Road
Palatine, Illinois 60067-7398
708-397-3000

Spring 1995

Dear Student in Small Business Management:

Over a five-year period every academic program at Harper College undergoes evaluation as a part of a Program Review. This year, Small Business Management is being reviewed.

You were identified as being a student in this program and we are asking you to complete the enclosed survey which asks about your background and interest, and your evaluation of the program and how it has helped you fulfill your goals.

Please take a few minutes to answer these questions and return the completed survey instrument in the stamped self-addressed envelope enclosed for your convenience. Since you are part of a sample responding to this survey it is important that everyone respond so that the answers will be representative of all students taking these Small Business Management courses.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Very truly yours,

John A. Lucas

John A. Lucas, Director
Office of Planning and
Research

jc
Enclosures

**SURVEY OF STUDENTS IN SMALL BUSINESS**

1- Gender
_____ A. Male
_____ B. Female

2- Age
_____ A. Under 21
_____ B. 21 - 25
_____ C. 26 - 35
_____ D. 36 - 45
_____ E. 46 - 61
_____ F. 62 and older

3- Family Income Level
_____ A. Under $20,000
_____ B. $20,000 - $29,999
_____ C. $30,000 - $39,999
_____ D. $40,000 - $49,999
_____ E. $50,000 - $75,000
_____ F. Over $75,000

4- Educational level
_____ A. Less than High School
_____ B. High School
_____ C. Some College
_____ D. Bachelor's Degree
_____ E. Advanced Degree

5- City/Village/Town of Residence: _____

6- Employment Status - Check (x) one
_____ A. Employed by someone else
_____ B. Unemployed
_____ C. Business owner

**If you are currently a business owner, please respond to questions 7, 8, and 9. Otherwise, go directly to question 10.**

7- What type of business is it?_____
_____

8- How long have you been in business?_____

9- Why did you start your business? Check (x) one.
_____ A. It is a family business passed down from relatives.
_____ B. Encouragement from friends, family, co-workers.
_____ C. Wanted to work for myself.
_____ D. Was unemployed and needed a "job".
_____ E. Other - Specify - _____
_____

10- Describe your business/career goal. Check (x) one.
_____ A. Start a business
_____ B. Expand an existing business
_____ C. Contribute more to my current/future employer's business

11- Where are you in your training schedule to accomplish your goals? Check (x) one
_____ A. This is the first course/seminar taken and plan to take more.
_____ B. Have taken courses/seminars before and plan more in the future.
_____ C. This is the last course/seminar to be taken at Harper College.

12- Why are you enrolled in this class? Check (x) one.

_____ A. To help me decide whether I want to own my own business.
_____ B. To help me know how to open the business I have been thinking about - Specify - _____
_____
_____ C. To help me better manage my current business
_____ D. To help me expand my current business
_____ E. To help my employer and myself do business in better ways.

13- What was the primary means that prompted you to enroll in this class? Check (x) all that apply.

_____ A. Harper College Course Schedule (newsprint) received at home.
_____ B. A specific brochure sent to me at my home/business.
_____ C. Referral from a service corps or retired executives (SCORE) counselor
_____ D. Referral from a small business counselor at a small business development center
Name:_____
_____ E. Announcement in small business publications:
Title:_____
_____ .
_____ F. Advertising in newspapers
_____ G. Advertising in small business publications
_____ H. Referral from a friend/relative who had taken a small business class at Harper College.
_____ I. Other - Specify - _____
_____

14- How beneficial was this course to you? Check (x) one.

_____ A. Very beneficial
_____ B. Beneficial
_____ C. Somewhat beneficial
_____ D. Not beneficial

15- How likely is it that this course/seminar will help you fulfill your previously stated goals? Check (x) one.

_____ A. Very likely
_____ B. Likely
_____ C. Not very likely
_____ D. Not likely at all
_____ E. Not sure
_____ F. Not applicable

16- What is your opinion about the length of time of this course/seminar? Check (x) one.

_____ A. Too long
_____ B. Just right
_____ C. Too short

17- How convenient is the time of this offering? Check (x) one.

_____ A. Very convenient
_____ B. Somewhat convenient
_____ C. Not convenient - Please list more convenient times: _____
_____
_____ D. List the day of the week and the times of your current class meetings:_____
_____

18- Would you recommend this class to another potential student? Check (x) one.

_____ A. Yes
_____ B. No
_____ C. Not sure

19- What is your overall evaluation of the instruction you have received? Check (x) one.

_____ A. Excellent
_____ B. Very Good
_____ C. Adequate
_____ D. Less than adequate
_____ E. Poor

Comments on Instruction:_____

_____

20- What is your overall evaluation of the environment of the classroom? Check (x) one.

_____ A. Pleasant
_____ B. Satisfactory
_____ C. Not so pleasant
_____ C. Uncomfortable - Please explain:_____

_____

21- How did you register? Check (x) one.

_____ A. FAX
_____ B. Touchtone Telephone - responded to a machine
_____ C. Phone-In - responded to a person

22- If you registered by FAX, was the process - Check (x) one.

_____ A. Easy
_____ B. Difficult

23- If you registered by Touchtone telephone, was the process - Check (x) one.

_____ A. Easy
_____ B. Difficult

24- If you registered by telephone, were you - Check (x) one.

_____ A. Helped quickly and pleasantly
_____ B. Helped quickly but not so pleasantly
_____ C. Kept waiting and helped pleasantly
_____ D. Kept waiting and helped not so pleasantly
_____ E. Could not easily get through to register

25- Did you register for more than one course/seminar at a time? Check (x) one.

_____ A. Yes - was ready to pay total bill all at once.
_____ B. Yes - willing to make a partial payment for the first class while waiting to pay for the second class.
_____ C. No - only wanted to register for one class.
_____ D. No - wanted to register for more than one class but was unable or unwilling to pay for all classes up front.

26- Were you able to register for all the classes you wished to take? Check (x) one.

_____ A. Yes
_____ B. No - the other classes were full
_____ C. No - I did not want to pay for all the classes I wanted up front, but I registered later as I could.
_____ D. No - I did not want to pay for all the classes I wanted up front and did not register for other classes later.

27- Did you ask for extra information about the class when you registered? Check (x) one.

_____ A. Yes - Customer assistance was pleasant

_____ B. Yes - Customer assistance was not so pleasant - Please explain:_____

_____

_____

_____ C. No

28- What was your experience during the process of registering for this course/seminar? Check (x) all that apply.

_____ A. Pleasant
_____ B. Easy
_____ C. Difficult
_____ D. Inaccurate information in the newspaper course schedule
_____ E. Difficulty in getting through to the Registration personnel
_____ F. Other:_____

_____

29- Any Additional Comments? _____

_____

_____

**THANK YOU** for taking time out of your busy schedule to respond to this survey. Your feedback is very important to the Business and Professional Development Department at Harper College.

## Operational Staff:

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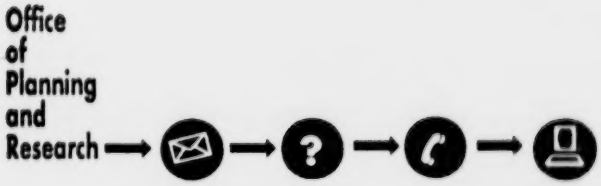


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